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HEADLINE: Eli Lilly & Co. and Acacia Biosciences Enter Into Research Collaboration;
First Corporate Agreement for Acacia's Genome Reporter Matrix(TM)

DATELINE: RICHMOND, Calif., Aug. 11

BODY:

Acacia Biosciences and Eli Lilly and Company (Lilly) announced today the signing of a joint research collaboration to utilize Acacia's Genome Reporter Matrix(TM) (GRM) to aid in the selection and optimization of lead compounds. Under the collaboration, Acacia will provide chemical and biological profiles on a class of Lilly's compounds for an undisclosed fee.

Acacia's GRM is an assay-based computer modeling system that uses yeast as a miniature ecosystem. The GRM can profile the extent, nature and quantity of any changes in gene expression. Because of the similarities between the yeast and human genome, the system serves as an excellent surrogate for the human body, mimicking the effects induced by a biologically active molecule.

"Using yeast as a model organism for lead optimization makes a lot of sense given the high degree of homology with human metabolic pathways," said William Current of Lilly Research Laboratories. "Acacia's innovative GRM has the potential to provide enormous insight into the therapeutic impact of our compounds and make the drug discovery process more rational. It should substantially accelerate the development process."

"This first agreement with a major pharmaceutical company is an important milestone in the development of Acacia," said Bruce Cohen, President and CEO of Acacia. "The deal is in line with our strategy of establishing alliances that will allow our collaborators to use genomic profiles to identify and optimize compounds within their existing portfolios. In the long run, this technology can be used to characterize large scale combinatorial libraries, predict side effects prior to clinical trials and resurrect drugs that have failed during clinical trials."

The GRM incorporates two critical elements: chemical response profiles and genetic response profiles. The chemical response profiles measure the change in gene expression caused by potential therapeutics and then rank genes with altered expressions by degree of response. The genetic response profiles measure changes in gene expression caused by mutations in the genes encoding potential targets of pharmaceuticals; these genetic response profiles represent gold standards in drug discovery by defining the response profile expected for drugs with perfect selectivity and specificity. By comparing the two profiles, one can analyze a potential drug candidate's ability to mimic the action of a 'perfect' drug.

Acacia Biosciences is a functional genomics company developing proprietary technologies to enhance the speed and efficacy of drug discovery and development. Acacia's Genome Reporter Matrix capitalizes on the latest advances in genomics and combinatorial chemistry to generate comprehensive profiles of drug candidates' in vivo activity.

SOURCE Acacia Biosciences

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